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1694

HISTORICAL SKETCH*****

OF THE ORIGIN AND GROWTH OF THE
WOMAN'S MISSIONARY SOCIETIES
OF THE REFORMED CHURCH.

BY MRS. E. S. YOCKEY.



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(REVISED TO DATE.)

ALSO CONSTITUTION
AND
ENGRAVINGS OF THE OFFICERS
OF THE
W. M. S. G. S.

PUBLISHED BY
THE WOMAN'S JOURNAL,
ALLIANCE, OHIO.

back to the Reformation period, now studied for the first time, she found much that was instructive and inspiring, in the self-denying labors of the early church fathers in this country, much to emulate and love; in the church doctrines, centralized in Jesus Christ, *all* that was needed for spiritual growth and activity. But as time passed on, there was a growing sense of discrepancy between the glorious doctrine of the church, her age and prestige, historically considered, and her present practices, in the early seventies.

How could a church revolve around Christ as a center, and yet manifest so little zeal in carrying out his final command? It is undoubtedly right for a church or an individual to cherish a just pride in honorable ancestry. But in either case, when that pride satisfies, it ceases to be a stimulus to further effort. Conservatism based upon a reverence for the underlying principles of institutions founded on self-denial and

BAPTIZED IN BLOOD,

and that serves as a check upon wild enthusiasm, is to be commended. Conservatism that clings to the forms and traditions of the past, disregarding alike the needs and facilities of the present, as well as the advance in modern thought and method, can only be condemned. The old idea that church purity can only be maintained by treading in the exact footprints of its forefathers, is happily, fast dying out. Truth is eternal and unchangeable, but methods of applying truth may, nay *must* vary according to time and circumstance. The highest order of intelligence can not only comprehend the eternal verities, but can apply them *under* existing conditions, for we are all to some extent, "creatures of circumstance."

We can not wholly separate ourselves from the spirit of the times in which we live. To attempt, in church or state the continuance of methods suited to past ages and dissimilar conditions, would be fatal not only to progress, but would doom either to slow death or oblivion.

The Reformed Church in its establishment in this country, showed the true missionary spirit. Her founders

FACED DANGERS UNTOLD,

overcame obstacles innumerable, and bore burdens and privations well-nigh insupportable, yet pressed forward with un-

daunted courage and unfailing faith, in their efforts to "go up and possess the land."

HER EARLY HISTORY IN THE U. S.

must appeal to the admiration of all who study it. But the hardships that for many years involved her mere existence as a church, the prodigious labor needed to "build her walls and strengthen her bulwarks," together with the conservatism that was the natural inheritance of her German forefathers, centered her thoughts and efforts for many years within herself, and bounded her horizon by our own shores.

The Missionary Society of the German Reformed Church was created by the Synod and organized at Frederick, Md., Sept. 28, 1826. Though organized by the Synod, it was carried forward in an independent way. Under this Board and as auxiliary to it a Female Missionary Society was created in Frederick, Md. in October, 1826. There was also a Female Missionary Society of Germantown, Pa. organized about this time. The report of the Treasurer of the Mission Board in 1827, credits this society with a contribution of \$50.00.

In 1838, after heathen darkness had been penetrated with Gospel torches carried by other denominations, a few of our devoted home missionaries conceived the idea of extending their labors into foreign lands. Our first Foreign Mission Board was organized Sept. 29, 1838. For twenty-five years through this Board, the contributions of the church were given through the "American Board," under whose care Rev. Benjamin Schneider of our church labored. Our church also contributed through the German Evangelical Missionary Society, to the support of Rev. Oscar Lohr, the founder of the Mission in Bismarck, India, and his assistant, Rev. Jacob Hauser, both ministers of the Reformed Church. But after 1865, foreign mission work in our church languished for many years, and well-nigh died. During these years the work was growing in interest and extent in other denominations. The women were waking up to the possibilities and responsibilities of womanhood in relation to foreign mission work.

THE MOANS OF DEGRADED WOMANHOOD,

the wails of suffering childhood, had been wafted over the seas to their ears, and they responded, some of them by saying,

‘Here am I, send me;’ others by organizing themselves into Woman’s Missionary Societies in order to raise money for the support of the workers in the mission field. As the interest increased, the offering increased in like ratio. The women of other denominations were organizing their forces, which soon made itself felt throughout the churches and penetrated the entire church organization. Through all of these years our church was practically doing nothing for missions. The “fields were white to harvest” but we sent forth no laborers. It is true that there was always a little interest manifested in the home fields, but even this work was feebly done when compared with the work of other denominations. Mission points in the growing centres of population were occupied by other denominations while the strength of the Reformed Church was largely exhausted in controversy. In the meantime

MILLIONS WERE PERISHING

in heathen darkness for want of the Gospel-light which *we might* have sent them. But this state of apathy was not to continue. In 1873 the Board of Foreign Missions met and re-organized at the home of Hon. R. F. Kelker, at Harrisburg, Pa. The memory of this dear brother should be honored by every missionary worker in the church, for from that time to the present he has ever been the faithful friend and liberal supporter of the foreign mission work. His words of encouragement have been strength and inspiration to beginners in the work.

FIRST MISSIONARY.

After the reorganization of the Foreign Mission Board, the foundation was laid for our Japan Mission. But notice that the work *did not* and *could not progress* until after the Peace of 1878 was established at the meeting of General Synod at Lancaster, Pa. At a special meeting of the Board during the sessions of General Synod, definite steps were taken, and at a subsequent meeting on Sept. 20, of the same year, Rev. Ambrose D. Gring was chosen as our first missionary to Japan. The receipts of the first year were \$20,000 and the work then begun has been of steady growth.

But what has this to do with Woman’s Missionary Societies in the Reformed Church? In May, 1869, Rev. S. B. Yockey made so far as can be ascertained, one of the

FIRST PUBLIC SUGGESTIONS OF WOMAN'S WORK

in Missions in the Reformed Church, on the floor of the Ohio Synod convened at Delaware, O. But the time had not yet come for that seed to take root and grow in the conservative soil of the Ref. Ch. In 1876, after watching the great progress made by the women in sister denominations, it was felt that the time had come to inaugurate this work in the Ref. Ch. There had been for some years women's Aid Societies, whose chief aim had been to raise money to help their own congregation. Some of these did undoubtedly make contributions for missionary work, but this was incidental. Then there were a number of congregational societies under the leadership of pastors, but Women's Missionary Societies as *they now exist* whose exclusive aim was to work for missions, not only in raising money, but in creating sentiment, in educating and training the women and children along the lines of missionary activity, *were unknown*. The subject was broached in the Xenia congregation with much diffidence, because here, as all over the Reformed Church, the women were expected to

"KEEP SILENCE IN THE CHURCHES."

Their voices were never heard even in public prayer, and to this day, in most of the prayer meetings of the church the number of *audible* prayers is limited to the number of men present. How much the church owes to the number of *silent* prayers that ascend heavenward from feminine hearts, can never be known.

The movement in behalf of a Woman's Missionary Society in the Xenia congregation, at first met with but little favor from the older members of the church, and an organization was not immediately effected. It was too much like an innovation on established customs. But as is often the case, intimate acquaintance

ROBS A FOE OF HIS TERRORS.

Frequent mention from the pulpit and in social intercourse of the benefits other denominations were deriving from woman's work in Missionary Societies, brought about a gradual change of sentiment, and on Feb. 20, 1877, the formal organization of the Woman's Missionary Society of the First Ref. Ch. of Xenia, O., was effected. It is gratifying to be able to state

that notwithstanding the lack of enthusiastic support, the lowest amount ever raised by this first Woman's Miss. Soc. in one year was \$44.

While the work of this society was done quietly for many years, there can be no doubt that its leavening effects have been manifold. Letters of inquiry were frequently received by pastor or his wife especially after the year 1883, asking for information and suggestions, and its first constitution, with some modifications, was copied and sent out again and again. How many Woman's Societies were organized between the date of Feb. 1877, and that of the first Woman's Classical Missionary Society, is not accurately known, but there were undoubtedly a goodly number.

The first official endorsement and recognition given to woman's work was that of the Pittsburg Synod held in Kittanning in 1883. The following is a brief quotation of the report:

"Since two of these laborers in Japan are ladies, we think the time has come when we should put forth efforts to enlist the organized aid of the women of our church, for in them is found much of the faith and piety existing in our midst; why this mighty force should lie inoperative and dormant, one knows not. Believing that it should be utilized and organized, we advise the following action:

Resolved, that the Board of Missions be directed to prepare a congregational and synodical form, to aid in establishing Ladies' Missionary Societies, the first for congregational organizations, and the second for the purpose of organizing a Ladies' Foreign Missionary Society within the bounds of Pittsburg and that means be provided whereby they may communicate and annually report to this synod."

C. R. Dieffenbacher,
Chairman.

The first Classical Woman's Missionary Society, was that of Illinois Classis. The first meeting was held Aug. 31, 1883, with Mary A. Meyer, President.

The year following the Miami Classis took steps toward organizing. An Executive Committee consisting of Mrs. H. M. Herman, Mrs. B. Kuhns and Mrs. S. B. Yockey was appointed. On May 29, 1885, an organization was effected.

In the same year, on Oct. 6, the W. M. S. of Philadelphia Classis was organized with Mrs. R. S. Dotterer as president.

Again in 1885, the Pittsburg Synod reiterated their former position toward the woman's work in the following resolutions:

Resolved, That we respectfully recommend the immediate organization of Women's Foreign Missionary Societies in every congregation within the bounds of this Synod.

Resolved, That delegates be sent annually from these Societies to a Synodical Woman's Convention, to be held the second day of the meeting of this Synod.

Resolved, That we recommend the Societies to work especially this fall and coming winter with a view to enable the Board to send Miss Lizzie Poorbaugh to her appointed station in Japan.

Resolved, That the pastors of this Synod bring this matter at once to the attention of the women of their respective congregations.

In accordance with this action of Pittsburg Synod, on Sept. 30, 1886, delegates from four of its classes met in conjunction with Synod, and in the parlors of St. Paul's Orphans' Home

ORGANIZED THE FIRST SYNODICAL

W. M. Society of the Reformed Church, with Miss Jean Craig as President. During this meeting a motion prevailed that the officers of the Society be a committee to attend the meeting of General Synod to be held at Akron, in the spring of 1887, with a view to the organization of a Woman's Missionary Society of General Synod.

In order to make clear the progress of the work in the different synods, it is necessary to go back a little. After the organization of the W. M. S. of Miami Classis, a committee was at once appointed, with Mrs. S. B. Yockey as chairman, to overture Ohio Synod, in behalf of a Synodical Society. Accordingly, at the meeting of Synod in Cedarville, Ill., in Oct. 1886, the overture was presented and referred to a special committee, with Rev. J. J. Leberman, D. D. as chairman, who submitted the following report:

"The Synod desires to express its gratification and most hearty appreciation of the missionary work and operations in which the women of the church have engaged, and in the increased interest that is manifestly taken in the formation of Woman's Missionary Societies throughout the Reformed Church. This Synod recognizing the importance of having Woman's Missionary Societies in all the congregations of our church would recommend:

That each pastor in the bounds of this Synod be requested to preach a special sermon on the subject of 'Woman's work in the Church,' and that he in connection with the consistory co-operate in the formation of Woman's Missionary Societies in the congregations.

That the officers of the different classes be appointed a committee by this Synod to assist in the formation of Woman's Classical Missionary Associations.

That the different Woman's Missionary organizations, both of congregations and classes, be requested to send representatives to the next annual meeting of the Synod, for the purpose of presenting their claims, and also to organize a Woman's Missionary Society of Ohio Synod.

That the Synod fixes the Thursday evening during its next annual sessions as the time for the consideration of Woman's Missionary organizations in connection with the missionary work of the church.

That the Synod hereby invites Mrs. S. B. Yockey to present this important subject before the Synod at the time appointed."

In accordance with the recommendation of Synod, representatives of the classical and congregational societies met and organized a Synodical Society, Oct. 27, 1887, with Mrs. G. G. Prugh, President.

In the meanwhile, the various Classical Societies elected delegates to represent them at the Missionary Convention of General Synod, to be held at Akron in 1887. Philadelphia Classis went a step farther, and sent a petition to General Synod to take favorable action in behalf of Woman's Missionary Societies. The church papers had for some time preceding issued a call to the women of the church to attend the coming convention.

Several weeks before the meeting, the Executive Committee of the W. M. S. of Pittsburg Synod, that being the only Synodical Woman's Society then in existence, sent an urgent request to Mrs. S. B. Yockey, asking her to present the cause of Missions as related to the women of the Reformed Church, to the General Synod.

On Thursday, June 2nd, at 9 A. M. as a result of this agitation from so many sources, twenty-five women assembled in the parlors of Grace Reformed Church, Akron, O.

After devotional exercises and enrollment of delegates, the following officers were elected for a term of three years: President, Mrs. S. B. Yockey; Vice Presidents, Mrs. H. M. Herman, and Mrs. J. M. Evans; Rec. Sec., Mrs. A. K. Zartman; Cor. Sec., Mrs. E. D. Wettach; and Treas., Mrs. J. A. Keller.

These officers together with three additional persons, were constituted the Executive Com. The persons added

were Mrs. J. N. Burger, Mrs. R. S. Dotterer, and Mrs. R. Bell. Mrs. P. Keil and Miss Etta K. Prugh were appointed as the committee to prepare a constitution, to be presented at the next regular meeting of the Society. They represented five synods and eleven classes, as follows:

Synods:—Ohio, Pittsburg, Central, Eastern and Potomac. Classes, Miami, St. Joseph, E. Ohio, Lancaster, Tuscarawas, St. Paul's, Somerset, Mercersburg, Lancaster, (E.S.,) E. Susquehanna and Kansas.

Two committees, one in the interest of Home, and the other of Foreign Missions, were appointed.

The committee on Home Missions was composed of the following ladies: Mrs. F. B. Hahn, Mrs. E. D. Wettach, Mrs. R. C. Zartman, Mrs. M. Loucks, and Mrs. G. W. Henning, Secretary.

The Foreign Mission Committee was composed of Miss Jean Craig, Miss Annie Seibert, Mrs. H. M. Herman, Mrs. J. M. Evans, Mrs. P. Keil.

FIRST HOME MISSIONARY WORK.

The Secretary of the committee on Home Missions was instructed to present a request to the Board of Home Missions of General Synod, asking that they designate some special mission point to the support of which the W. M. S. G. S. might apply such of its funds as should be contributed for Home Mission work. To this request the Board responded by recommending Sioux City, Iowa, to be taken under the special care of the Society.

FIRST FOREIGN MISSIONARY WORK.

The Committee on Foreign Missions was instructed to apply all funds that should be raised for the foreign field to the building of a school-house for a Girls' School at Sendai, Japan, and for the support of the missionaries there, the money to be sent through the treasurer of the Board of Foreign Missions of Gen. Synod. The receipts for all moneys paid to both Home and Foreign Boards were to be sent to the secretaries of the Home and Foreign Committees respectively.

On Thursday evening, June 2nd, Mrs. Yockey presented the cause of Woman's Work in the Church to the members of General Synod. Missionary addresses were also delivered by Drs. Van Horne, Weiser and Swander.

The collection received at this service, the first ever taken during the sessions of General Synod for the furtherance of woman's work, amounted to forty-eight dollars and fifty cents.

The closing sessions of this first Woman's Convention of Gen. Synod was held Friday morning, June 3rd.

During all of these sessions, two of the most active, efficient workers were Miss Etta K. Prugh and Mrs. J. M. Evans, both of whom are now gone from our midst.

The former, on the 11th of June, but little more than one week later, fell suddenly into that sleep which knows no earthly waking.

The latter, after several years of faithful effort in behalf of the Woman's Society, lessened only by failing health, on Sept. 15, 1893, exchanged the toil of earth for the reward of heaven.

The writer would fain lay down her pen and drop a tear, while in the name of the "Woman's Missionary Society of General Synod she lays another wreath of laurel upon each grave.

During the two days' meeting the dominant feelings among all present were first, thanksgiving to God for leading the women to the work and then opening the way for its accomplishment; second, gratitude to the brethren who had cordially welcomed them to a place in the Missionary work of the church; third, and this feeling was noticeably prevalent, *buoyant hopefulness* for the future.

The second is mingled with sadness that so many are yet but luke-warm in reference to woman's work, while some maintain the frigidity of extreme conservatism. The third, hopefulness for the future, is strangely mingled with patience, born of slow development, frequent disappointments and severe rebuffs, yet, like the fabled Phoenix, that from its own ashes rises to new life, so from its past failures will the W. M. S. G. S. rise to glorious fruition.

During the three years intervening between the organization of the Society at Akron, in 1887 and its second meeting at Lebanon, Pa. in 1890, constant efforts were made along the line of organization. As will be remembered, the General Synod, in response to a request from the Home Mission Committee for some well defined work, recommended the Mission at Sioux City, Iowa.

CIRCULARS SENT OUT.

In Sept. 1887, a circular was sent to every pastor within the bounds of the Reformed Church in the U. S. asking for the co-operation of the women of his charge in the work undertaken by the W. M. S. G. S. Comparatively few responses were received, and in the begining of the year 1889, a second circular, given here in full, was sent not only to every pastor in the church, but to *every congregation*, so far as they could be located, for many charges consist of three or four congregations each.

Xenia, Ohio, 1889.

This letter will doubtless reach many congregations that are already organized for missionary work. When we consider the recent organization of our church for such work, we have every reason to rejoice not only in the work accomplished, but also in the development of the missionary spirit. The time has now come, however, for a more aggressive work in the mission field, both at home and abroad. There are many reasons why *every* congregation in the Reformed church should be organized for this work. Any work in life is done more effectively, if done systematically. This is recognized in all secular work "The children of this world are in their general tion wiser than the children of light." The regular giving, incident to such an organization, is not only the *best* way from a business standpoint, of accumulating missionary money, but it is the Bible way. "Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him." There is no greater educational force in a church than a missionary society. Some of its members are sure to be devoted and enthusiastic workers well informed in regard to the work done in their own and in other churches. These will become mediums of information, and sources of inspiration to others. This diffusion of knowledge through the contact of minds, which will be a natural outgrowth of the society, *must* result in a more general knowledge of the needs of the church, in broader views of duty of Christians in working and giving and in improved methods of work.

Finally; Jesus commanded us to do this work. "Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature."

The Woman's Missionary Society of General Synod undertook the support of the Sioux City mission. While many congregations have cheerfully responded, many more have not, and this failure is doubtless owing to the fact that they are not properly organized for the work. What we need is the *complete* organization of our church into congregational, classical and synodical missionary societies. Brother, we ask you to help us. Organize the women and children of your congregation

into Missionary Societies. I enclose constitutions as a basis for such organizations where none exist.

In order to facilitate the compilation of a statistical report of the mission work of the Reformed Church, I earnestly request you to answer the following questions.

1. Have you a Missionary Society?
2. When was it organized?
3. What is its object, Home or Foreign Missions?
4. How much have you contributed as a total?
5. How much in 1888?
6. If you contribute to *both* Home and Foreign Missions, how much have you given to each, as above indicated?
7. If you have *no* organization, can you estimate the amount of your missionary contributions?

This circular was in *every case*, accompanied by a plea in the handwriting of the president, urging not only help in the work already undertaken, but more complete organization of the women and children for the work. The responses numbered about two hundred, and the sum, in round numbers of \$600, was reported by the women for the Sioux City Mission, while a smaller amount was reported as having been contributed through the committee on Foreign Missions which, according to the instructions of General Synod, directed its efforts towards aiding the Girls' School at Sendai, Japan. This school is now the protege of the W. M. S. G. S. As already intimated, the chief effort during these first three years was along the line of organization, the extreme timidity of the women, together with the old-time conservatism of many congregations, making the first step difficult of accomplishment.

In Feb. 1890, a third circular was sent as before to *every congregation*, so far as possible, urging anew the necessity of organization, and also asking for a complete report of the money raised by the women for missionary purposes, the same to be presented at the second triennial meeting of the W. M. S. G. S. at Lebanon, Pa., in May 1890. To this circular nearly four hundred replies were received, some reporting no woman's society in the charge, while many gave more or less complete reports of work done. From these it was gathered that over \$5,680 had been contributed by the Woman's Missionary Societies of the church for the year 1889, and \$8,300 by the mixed societies. This at best was but approximately correct, many of the reports being conspicuously incomplete notwithstanding the efforts made to obtain accurate information.

During the three years closing with the meeting at Lebanon, Pa., in May 1890, over twelve hundred letters were sent out in the handwriting of the president urging organization, giving information where needed and desired, and suggesting lines of work, program, etc., where requested.

DISCOURAGEMENTS.

This work though necessarily burdensome, could have been cheerfully performed but for the element of discouragement so frequently encountered. A few pastors when petitioned in behalf of the women of their congregations, sent refusals instead of reports, saying that they reported to Classes and Synods, *not* to Woman's Missionary Societies. Some letters of rebuke, many of disapproval, and more of caution, were received. The condition of affairs during these years, can perhaps be best told by quoting a passage from the address of the president, at the meeting in Lebanon, Pa.

"The women began their work under many discouragements. We had no experience, no precedent, and truth compels me to say, we often felt that we had very little encouragement. Could I read to you some of the letters received during this time, of disapproval, and in a few instances of sharp rebuke, you would better understand the feeling of discouragement that at times well-nigh overwhelmed us. But I should much prefer reading the many kind words received from our missionary superintendents, heads of boards, and other devoted missionary workers. They

CHEERED OUR DARK HOURS

with their brotherly sympathy, and helped us over hard places with their advice."

The recollection after this long lapse of time, of some of the letters referred to, is akin to that of repeated cold draughts over a red-hot enthusiasm. The result was a gradual reduction of temperature, no doubt, but with a corresponding increase of adhesion.

One of the most difficult phases to meet was the disinclination on the part of some of the brethren and sisters, to assume or share responsibility by publicly indentifying themselves with the cause of the women. All of the arrangements for the meeting at Lebanon, were left to the president, who

finally acting under advice of the devoted missionary workers to whom reference was made in the passage quoted, shouldered though with fear and trembling, the entire responsibility, and planned the meeting, published notices, prepared the program, and perfected arrangements down to the minute details.

While truth demands that these facts be made public, justice demands that mention be made of the conscientiousness that breathed in almost every line received from the brethren. St. Paul, referring to his early persecution of the church, said, "I verily thought with myself, that I ought to do many things contrary to the name of Jesus of Nazareth." So those who opposed woman's work in missions, or in any public capacity were *conscientious* in their opposition, and just as rapidly as they became convinced that God had called the women to their work, they changed opposition into support. One truth, which in the writer's mind is reduced to an axiom, as a result of this interchange of communication, is this; *opposition that is based upon conviction is open to conviction.*

SECOND TRIENNIAL MEETING.

At the second triennial meeting thirty delegates, representing the five Synods and sixteen Classes, * were present.

Three important committees were appointed. One was to prepare blanks for credentials and statistical reports with the view of unifying the work. It was composed of Mrs. S. E. P. Mosser, Mrs. H. Bair and Miss Dermott.

The second was on publications and was composed of Mrs. L. M. Unger, Mrs. Dr. E. V. Gerhart, Mrs. Wm. Shaeffer, Mrs. S. E. P. Mosser, Mrs. Prof. Sheidt, Miss R. H. Schively and Mrs. S. B. Yockey.

The third and most important was to formulate a plan of work and consisted of Mrs. S. E. P. Mosser, Mrs. H. M. Herman, Mrs. P. Keil, and Miss R. H. Schively.

*Eastern Synod, seven Classes represented: Schuylkill, Lebanon, Philadelphia, Lancaster, Wyoming, West Susquehanna and East Penna. Pittsburg Synod, three Classes: Allegheny, Westmoreland and Somerset. Ohio Synod, two Classes: Miami and Lancaster. Potomac Synod, two Classes: Mercersburg and Virginia. Synod of Interior, two Classes: Wichita and Illinois.



MRS. T.H. SONNECKER. COR. SEC.



MRS. NETTIE ANTHONY. TREAS.



MRS. H.M. HERMAN.
PRESIDENT.



MISS JENNIE S. CLEVER REC. SEC.

OFFICERS OF W. M. S. G. S.



Mrs. E.S.
YOCKEY.



Mrs. ANNA McHENRY.



Mrs. T.S. LAND.



Mrs. D.B. SHUEY.

VICE AND SYNODICAL PRESIDENTS.

The writer has been minute in detail in recounting the proceedings of these first conventions because the attendance was limited, and no public record kept ; hence a large majority of the women of the church could know nothing about them. The proceedings of later years have all been recorded in the *Woman's Journal*, now the organ of the W. M. S. G. S.

Of all the reports given during the second convention, as well as those previously collected by the president, there were about one hundred and six (106) Woman's, and one hundred and twenty-six (126) mixed Missionary Societies.

A constitution was adopted. The election of officers for the ensuing three years resulted as follows : Pres., Mrs. M. E. Whitmore, Vice Presidents—the presidents of the synodical societies; Rec. Sec. Miss R. H. Schively, Cor. Sec. Mrs. P. Keil, Treas. Mrs. G. Z. Kunkle. Additional members of Ex. Committee, Mrs. M. D. Schaeffer, Mrs. S. C. Love, Mrs. S. B. Yockey, Mrs. T. R. Winsheimer, Miss A. M. Weistling.

One incident of the meeting at Lebanon, is worthy of note. Rev. C. U. Heilman sent the society a gift of twenty dollars the first tangible evidence of fraternal regard received with the exception of the collection taken on the floor of General Synod, at Akron, O. Could the brethren have seen the appreciation with which this token of good-will was received, they would surely give themselves the happiness and the women the encouragement of frequent repetition.

At the open meeting, held on the floor of General Synod, addresses were given by Mrs. H. Bair, Mrs. S. E. P. Mosser, Mrs. M. E. Whitmore, and Mrs. S. B. Yockey. That of the last named included the report of her three years' work as president.

With this second triennial meeting, brought by the grace of God to successful issue through the expenditure of so much labor and anxiety, much, but not all of the indifference and opposition disappeared. Many who had opposed or failed to encourage the movement, became convinced that the work was *for* and *from* God. The unwomanly aggressiveness which some feared was entirely absent. There was no spirit of self-seeking, no effort to adopt masculine methods, or usurp masculine prerogatives, but only an intensely earnest desire to

to have some part in the evangelization of the world. This earnestness, as is usually the case in the

BEST TYPE OF WOMANHOOD,

went hand in hand with a persistence that admitted no denial. To the careful observer who had noted the spirit of the first convention at Akron, and was now privileged to compare it with that of the second, there was a marked difference. The ideal had given way before the real. The poetry of expectation had been displaced by the prose of realization.

In this spirit the convention was organized; in this spirit new plans were laid for future work; in the same spirit the women separated at the close of the sessions. Having put their "hands to the plough" they were resolved never to look back.

During the next three years the new officers continued their efforts along the line of organization. The president, Mrs. Whitmore, seconded by her efficient corps of helpers and profiting by the mistakes of the past, spared no efforts to extend interest and effect organization. In Sept. 1891, the first number of the WOMAN'S JOURNAL, "long wished for, talked of and prayed over" appeared, with Mrs. Whitmore as editor. It has been from the beginning conducted in an able manner, and has maintained its footing in the face of disapproval, criticism, and shall I say it in this Golden Age of Woman's opportunity? *opposition from some who should have been its helpers.* But it has steadily grown in favor no less than in excellence. It has been from the first reliable authority on all matters pertaining to the work of the W. M. S. G. S. and is rapidly becoming what it has all along aimed at being, a true missionary hand-book for the church.

The third triennial meeting of the Society was held at Reading, Pa. May 25 and 26, 1893. At this meeting forty-five delegates, representing five synods and twenty-one classes, were present.*

*Eastern Synod, 9 classes: Schuylkill, Lebanon, Philadelphia, Lancaster, Wyoming, East Susquehanna, East Pennsylvania, Goshenhoppen and West Susquehanna.

Ohio Synod, 3 classes: E. Ohio, Tuscarawas and Lancaster.

Pittsburg Synod, 3 classes: Allegheny, Westmoreland and Somerset.

Synod Interior, 3 classes: Lincoln, Iowa and Illinois.

Synod Potomac, 3 classes: Juniata, Mercersburg and Maryland.

The interest of the convention centered in the report of the Committee on plan of work, which had been appointed at Lebanon. The report with some modifications, was adopted and the Committee continued for the next three years, with a single change, Mrs. S. J. Houtz being substituted for Mrs. P. Keil, who retired at her own request. The plans suggested were comprehensive, and looked toward complete organization, united effort and increased results. As this report appeared in the "JOURNAL," we will only refer to two of the important items.

1. "All Classical moneys for woman's work to be passed into Woman's Classical Treasury, to be sent to the Classical Treasurer by whom it will be forwarded to the Treasurers of the proper Boards, their receipts to be sent to the Treasurer of W. M. S. G. S. who will publish quarterly reports."

2. "All Classical Societies to report according to the classical year."

The report of this Committee included suggestions as to best ways of arousing interest and extending knowledge among all, but particularly the women and children of the church, and carefully provided for the collection of missionary contributions from the women of synods and classes, as well as congregations, that were not yet organized into Missionary Societies. It recommended in addition, that the W. M. S. G. S. should at that time assume the entire support of the Girls' School at Sendai, Japan, but this item failed of adoption on account of the unsettled condition of the school.

Figures are sometimes misleading from two causes, viz : inaccurate and inadequate reports. Some societies have in the past, included the worth of boxes sent to Home Missionaries in their financial reports. Others have paid the missionary apportionments of the congregation, and received *no* credit as Woman's Missionary Societies; while in other cases still, it is probable that the amount raised has been credited *twice*, once to the congregation, and once to the Woman's Missionary Society. In no other way can the discrepancies between the reports of Treasurers of Mission Boards and those of Woman's

Missionary Societies, be explained. Time and experience will rectify all of these irregularities, and we may indulge the reasonable hope that at no distant date the women may know just *how much* they are doing from a money standpoint. But in the meantime, in comparing figures and showing results, we but approximately show the status of missionary work among the women of the church.

Again, a majority of the ministers of the church neglected answering the questions asked by means of circulars, but it is only fair to presume that all, or *nearly* all of the congregations organized for missionary work would be sufficiently interested to report. Hence the estimate as to number of Societies cannot be far from the truth.

When the Society of General Synod was organized at Akron, O., in 1887, there were one Synodical and four Classical Woman's Missionary Societies, in existence, the number of Congregational Societies, and the amount of money raised by them being unknown.

MONEY RAISED.

At the second meeting in Lebanon, Pa., there were four Synodical, a gain of 3, seventeen Classical a gain of 13, 106 congregational Woman's Missionary Societies, and 126 congregational Societies that include both sexes. The money reported for 1883, that being the only year for which the amount could be estimated, was \$5,680.00 raised by the Woman's Missionary Societies an average of \$53.58, and \$7,300.00 raised by the mixed societies, an average of \$57.02. Total number of congregational societies, 232.

At the third meeting in Reading Pa., 1893, the report showed four Synodical Societies, no gain, twenty-six Classical a gain of nine, 144 Congregational Woman's Missionary Societies, a gain of thirty-eight, and 189 Congregational Mixed Societies, a gain of sixty-three. The amount of money reported by the Woman's Societies for the year ending May, 1893 was \$10,000, making an average of \$69.44, two-thirds for Home and one-third for Foreign Missions. The amount raised by the mixed societies for that year was not given. Total number of congregational Societies 333, a gain of 101.

Since the last meeting of W. M. S. G. S. in 1893, one Synodical Society for both sexes, that of Potomac Synod, was

organized, Sept. 20, 1894, and two Classical Societies, that of Lehigh Classis, Eastern Synod, organized Sept. 7, 1893, and that of Clarion Classes, Pittsburg Synod, organized Sept. 13, 1894.

THE WOMAN'S JOURNAL.

At the meeting at Reading, a proposition was made to the Society to undertake the publication of the "WOMAN'S JOURNAL" as the organ of the W. M. S. G. S. and a committee was appointed, with Mrs. Nettie B. Anthony as chairman, to report in July 1893, to the Executive Committee which was empowered to act. By the action of the Executive Committee the work was put into the hands of a special committee of three with Mrs. S. J. Houtz, as chairman.

The members of the Executive Committee were commissioned to raise money for its purchase, the enterprise having been started by private parties. The committee of three labored with a zeal that knew no weariness, and their labors were so far successful that in Sept. 1894, the W. M. S. G. S. took possession of *The WOMAN'S JOURNAL* as its official organ. The purchase money was not all raised until the beginning of the new year, the work being completed on Jan. 24, 1895. Mrs. Whitmore was continued as editor.

In Oct. 1894, the W. M. S. G. S. after bringing the matter before the District Synodical Societies, assumed the entire support of the Girls' School at Sendai, Japan, thus at length carrying out the suggestion embodied in the original report of the committee to F. P. of Work.

This step means extended efforts, increased liberality, entire consecration, on the part of the women of the church. But as Samuel of old raised his Ebenezer, "Hitherto hath the Lord helped us," so has the W. M. S. G. S. raised for itself an Ebenezer in the Mission field that shall be a perpetual reminder of God's goodness in the past, and a continued assurance of future help.

FOURTH TRIENNIAL MEETING.

The fourth triennial meeting of the W. M. S. G. S. was held in the First Reformed Church of Dayton, O, May 27-30, 1896.

Twenty-three classes were represented by 30 delegates.

The advisability of consolidating the Woman's Journal with some other periodical in the church was fully discussed, also the debt of over \$600 and how to get rid of it, but it was finally decided to continue the publication of the Journal as such for the present.

At this meeting Miss Anna M. Kieffer presented a paper on "Children's Work in the Church, which met with general approval. As the result of the discussion of this subject a Committee was appointed to publish the Mission Band Helper; frame a constitution for Mission Bands; publish pamphlets containing hints to leaders, occasional leaflets, to see that literature is distributed, and by studying the methods of other churches, to improve our own Children's department.

This Committee consisted of Miss Anna M. Kieffer, Mrs. D. B. Shuey, Mrs. H. M. Herman, Miss Charlotte Voigt, Miss R. H. Schively, Mrs. R. L. Gerhart.

The Society resolved: Heartily to support any action that General Synod might take toward establishing missions in China.

Mrs. R. S. Dotterer and Miss Elizabeth Barnhart were elected delegates to represent the Society at the International meeting of the Woman's Foreign Mission Societies at Glasgow, Scotland.

The following officers were elected: President, Mrs. H. M. Herman; Vice Presidents, Presidents of Synodical Societies; Rec. Sec. Miss Jennie S. Clever; Cor. Sec. Mrs. T. H. Sonnedeker; Treas. Mrs. Nettie Anthony.

INDICATIONS OF A BRIGHTER FUTURE.

The growing plants, the swelling buds, the opening flowers, the singing birds, that in obedience to the warm sunshine and spring zephyrs, transform the frostbound earth into a garden of beauty, furnish repeated assurances of the glories that shall follow in the train of each succeeding spring.

In the course of history, the growth of nations as a result of obedience to certain fundamental principles, their decline and fall when those principles have been ignored or violated, are prophecies of what shall be the future of our own nation if she forgets the statutes of God built into her very foundation by our puritan progenitors.

So it is in the church of Jesus Christ. The Spirit, that from the beginning, dwelt in the hearts of God's people; that led the Israelites through dangers seen and unseen into the Promised Land; that under the New Dispensation came down on the day of Pentecost and converted three thousand, that later, nerved the apostles to meet danger and death that they might bring into new life their own nation and the Gentile world; that enabled St. Paul to say in the face of bonds and afflictions, "None of these things move me; neither count I my life dear unto myself;" *that Spirit is still with us.* "Behold the Lord's hand is not shortened that it cannot save."

It is none but the Spirit of God that has, within this nineteenth century, led the missionaries of the Cross away from home and all that life holds dear, to journey over oceans and deserts, to climb mountains and penetrate jungles, under the scorching heat of a torrid sun, or amid the piercing blasts of the eternal ice-fields; that has given them courage to incur risks of being

DEVoured BY SAVAGE CANNIBALS;

to endure privations unnumbered and tortures untold; to be "all things to all men, that they might by all means save some."

And through that same Spirit, walls of opposition have been thrown down, mountains of prejudice levelled, and doors of opportunity swung ajar, until the whole world is practically open to the Gospel, and millions in heathen lands are casting away their idols, and are learning the "Old, old story of Jesus and His love." And we, the women of the Reformed Church, have realized in these later days the words of the prophet Joel; "And on my servants, and on my handmaidens I will pour out in those days of my spirit."

Our work has been signally owned and blessed of God. We believe that His seal is affixed to the charter of the W. M. S. G. S. and under its protection we may be strong to labor and brave to endure.

With our motto, "Out of darkness into light through the blood of Christ;" with our past successes as an earnest of future victory, we may indeed hasten the day when, "At the name of Jesus every knee shall bow of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth;

And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father."

APPENDIX.

Dates of organization of W. M. S. G. S. and its auxiliaries.

W. M. S. G. S. organized at Akron, O. June 2, 1887. Mrs. S. B. Yockey, Pres.

1883.

W. M. S. of Illinois Classis Aug. 31. Mary A. Meyer, President.

1885.

W. M. S. of Miami Classis, O. Synod organized at Beech Grove, O. May 19. Mrs. H. M. Herman, Pres.

W. M. S. of Philadelphia Classis, E. Synod organized at Norristown, Pa. Oct. 6. Mrs. Dotterer, Pres.

1886.

W. M. S. of Pittsburg Synod, organized at Butler, Pa. Sept. 30, 1886. Miss Jean Craig, Pres.

M. S. of W. Susquehanna Classis, E. Synod organized at Aaronsburg, Pa. May 23rd.

W. M. S. Somerset Classis, Pittsburg Synod, organized in St. Paul's Church, Wilhelm, Pa. Aug. 26. Mrs. J. M. Evans, Pres.

1887.

W. M. S. Ohio Synod organized at Lancaster, O. Oct. 27. Mrs. G. G. Prugh, Pres.

1888.

W. M. S. of Eastern Synod organized at Church of Ascension, Norristown, Pa. Oct. 12. Mrs. Mary G. Hietslu, Pres.

W. M. S. Schuylkill Classis E. Synod organized in St. John's Church, Reading, May 31. Mrs. S. E. P. Mosser, Pres.

W. M. S. Lancaster Classis, O. Synod organized at Delaware O. May 25.

W. M. S. Wyoming Classis E. Synod was organized at Danville, Pa. Sep. 6.

W. M. S. Illinois Classis, Synod Interior was organized in 1888.

1889.

W. M. S. of Synod of Interior was organized at Forreston, Ills., Oct. 35. Mrs. H. Bair, Pres.

W. M. S. Kansas Classis was organized at Fairview, Kan. May, 18.

W. M. S. Lebanon Classis E. Synod was organized at Myerstown, Pa. Oct. 8.

W. M. S. Lancaster Classis O. Synod was organized at Manheim, Lancaster Co. Pa. May 31.

W. M. S. E. O. Classis Ohio Synod was organized at Paris, Stark Co. O. May 10. Mrs. J. C. Nunamaker, Pres.

W. M. S. of Tuscarawas Classis O. Synod was organized at Canton, O. June 7th.

W. M. S. E. Susquehanna Classis E. Synod was organized Sept. at Sunsbury, Pa.

1890.

W. M. S. Mercersburg Classis Potomac Synod, organized in Zion Reformed Church, Chambersburg, Pa. Aug.

M. S. Juniata Classis, Potomac Synod organized at Saxon, Pa. in May.

W. M. S. E. Pennsylvania Classis E. Synod was organized in Plainsfield, Northampton Co. Pa. May 16.

W. M. S. Wichita Classis Synod Interior, was organized at Whitewater, Kan. 1890.

W. M. S. Iowa Classis, Synod Interior organized at Lisbon, Iowa, Oct. Mrs. A. B. Achenbach, Pres.

1891.

W. M. S. of Westmoreland Classis Pittsburg Synod was organized April 1891 at Greensburg, Pa.

W. M. S. Tiffin Classis, O. Synod was organized in Lima, Ohio. May, 20. Mrs. H. T. Heller, Pres.

W. M. S. Goshenhoppen Classis E. Synod organized at Falkner Swamp, Pa. Oct. 7.

W. M. S. Lincoln Classis, Synod Interior was organized at Sioux City, Iowa, May 1891. Mrs. T. F. Stauffer, Pres.

1892.

W. M. S. Allegeney Classis, Pittsburg Synod was organized in Butler, Pa. Feb. 28th. Mrs. Brinker, Pres.

1893.

W. M. S. Lehigh Classis E. Synod was organized in St. John's Reformed Church, Allentown, Pa. Sept. 7. Mrs. J. B. Mauser, Pres.

1895.

M. S. Synod Potomac was organized Sept. 20. Mrs. Wm. Schaeffer, Pres.

1895.

W. M. S. of Tohickon Classis E. Synod was organized at Hellertown, Pa. Oct. 23. Mrs. Buchecker, Pres.

1897.

W. M. S. of N. C. Classis, Potomac Synod was organized at Mt. Hope Church, Guilford Co., May 6. Miss M. Ida Hedrick, Pres.

1898.

W. M. S. of Zion's Classis, Potomac Synod, was organized in York, Pa. Feb. 24. Miss Annie M. Blessing, Pres.

CONSTITUTION OF THE W. M. S. G. S.

ARTICLE I.

This association shall be known as the WOMAN'S MISSIONARY SOCIETY of the General Synod of the Reformed Church in the United States.

ARTICLE II.

The object of this Society shall be to aid in the advancement of the work of Christian Missions in Home and Foreign lands, with a view, especially, to the enlightenment and elevation of women to a saving faith in the Lord Jesus Christ both at home and abroad.

ARTICLE III.

This Society shall prosecute its work under the direction of the Boards of Foreign and Home Missions of the Reformed Church in the United States.

ARTICLE IV.

The membership of this Society shall consist of its officers and two women delegates from each classical society, or from each classis if not organized, within the bounds of the Church.

ARTICLE V.

The Society shall hold a meeting for the transaction of all necessary business regularly every three years in conjunction with the General Synod of the Reformed Church, or at another time and place if the Executive Committee shall so decide. Twelve authorized delegates shall constitute a quorum, and all its sessions shall be opened and closed with appropriate devotional exercises.

ARTICLE VI.

At the close of each triennial session the Society shall elect a President, Recording Secretary, Treasurer and Corresponding Secretary, to serve until the next triennial election. The Presidents of the Synodical Societies shall be Vice Presidents of this society by virtue of their office.

ARTICLE VII.

It shall be the duty of the President to preside at all meetings, and to have a supervision of the work of the Society.

In her absence or inability to serve, the Vice President whom she may appoint, shall act in her stead. In the absence of President and Vice President, a President *pro tem* shall be chosen.

ARTICLE VIII.

The Recording Secretary shall keep a complete roll of all the members (or delegates) and a correct record of the pro-

ceedings of the Society. In connection with the President, she shall sign all orders for moneys to be paid out for missions, and certify to all bills for incidental expenses of the Society before the same shall be presented to the Treasurer for payment.

ARTICLE IX.

The Treasurer shall keep a record, showing all receipts and disbursements, and all other financial affairs in connection with the Society. She shall pay only orders of the Society or Executive Committee drawn on the Treasurer, signed by the President and Secretary.

At the close of her term of office, she shall prepare an itemized statement of moneys received and disbursed, which shall be audited and approved by a Committee on Finance appointed by the President, before it is presented to the Society; and shall deliver all books, papers and moneys to her successor.

ARTICLE X.

The Corresponding Secretary shall carry on the general correspondence of the Society, notify the members of the Executive Committee of the time and place of the meetings, and promptly communicate to it any information in regard to missionary work necessary to its successful operation.

ARTICLE XI.

The Executive Committee shall consist of the officers of the Society, and five additional persons selected by the Society triennially of which the President shall be *ex officio* President. This Committee shall have power to dispose of all business which may claim attention between the triennial meetings of the Society. It may pay out moneys under the provisions of this constitution, and shall transact such other business of the Society as would suffer from being delayed until the triennial meeting, provided a full report of all transactions shall be submitted for the approval of the Society at its regular meeting.

It shall meet at the call of its President, and five members shall constitute a quorum to transact business.

ARTICLE XII.

Each Classical Society shall pay a contribution of Two Dollars each year, to be used in meeting the incidental expenses of the Society.

Such funds to go into the hands of the Treasurer and be disbursed under the rules regulating that office.

ARTICLE XIII.

This Constitution can be amended at any triennial meeting by a two-thirds majority of the members present, provided a written notice of the proposed change be sent to the Executive Committee six months previous.

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